

EPA REGION III

◇Office of Public Affairs

◇◇Early Bird Headlines

Monday, July 30, 2012

***** MORNING HOT LIST *****

EPA's water testing results in Dimock do not let the gas industry off the hook

NATURAL RESOURCES DEFENSE COUNCIL Earlier this week, EPA released the final round of results from its tests of drinking water wells in Dimock, PA - where state regulators have concluded that water supplies were contaminated with explosive levels of methane by the drilling activities of Cabot Oil and Gas. In releasing those results, EPA stated that the drinking water supplies of 61 families are safe to drink, basing that determination on the absence of significantly elevated levels of various pollutants, excluding methane. It is critical to note that EPA was not focused on - and did not make any conclusions with respect to - whether Cabot's practices in fact contaminated the aquifer that supplies these families' wells with dangerous levels of methane. As such, the EPA findings do not exonerate Cabot, or gas drilling and fracking more broadly, of contaminating drinking water in the Dimock case or otherwise. NRDC has released the following statement in response to EPA's release: "

WORCESTER: EPA awards \$173,000 to Md. Coastal Bays program

ASSOCIATED PRESS (Md.) OCEAN CITY — The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency says it is giving \$173,400 to the Maryland Coastal Bays Program for students on the Eastern Shore to pursue environmental careers. The funds are for educational, research, and career-related activities focusing on green infrastructure. That includes marine and science programs, internships and environmental stewardship programs. The EPA says the award increases EPA funding for the initiative to more than \$600,000. The award was announced Friday at a youth summit in Ocean City.

FirstEnergy forced to close Beaver County disposal site

PITTSBURGH POST GAZETTE The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection is forcing FirstEnergy Corp. to close a 1,700-acre waste disposal site along the border with West Virginia, because it has no lining and is leaking pollutants into ground water, according to a complaint and consent decree filed in U.S. District Court Friday. The Little Blue Run waste impoundment, in Beaver County's Greene Township and stretching into Hancock County, W. Va., has been getting a steady flow of waste slurry, through an underground pipeline, from the Bruce Mansfield power plant since 1974, according to the department's complaint. It has no lining, as that wasn't required in 1974.

Local victory: For now, the court says towns may restrict drilling

PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE The principle of local control was at issue in the state's new drilling regulations, and Commonwealth Court on Thursday sided with municipal officials. This victory, however, may be only temporary because the governor's office announced the state has appealed to the state Supreme Court. In a rare departure from the Republican mantra that big government should stay out of local affairs, the Legislature and Gov. Tom Corbett made sure when they enacted Marcellus Shale industry regulations earlier this year that the rules cleared the road of impediments for drillers. The result was a law that gave the state control over zoning related to drilling sites, superceding local zoning ordinances. That's not how other zoning laws work. For example, individual municipalities have the ability to create zoning rules for billboards or industrial operations or housing lot sizes and any number of other permutations, as long as the rules are not discriminatory against certain types of businesses and are uniformly applied. In other words, the state decides the big picture and leaves the details to local officials, who best know their local needs. Because the drilling law didn't do that, a group of towns -- including Cranberry, Cecil, Peters, South Fayette and Mount Pleasant -- sued. As a result of Commonwealth Court's 4-3 ruling, towns got a reprieve from overhauling their local zoning ordinances in the next few weeks. They now are on hold, probably until a pronouncement from the state's high court.

Townships wait for next move on gas zoning ruling

SCRANTON TIMES-DISPATCH Lackawanna County township officials praised a state appeals court ruling that restored some local zoning control over natural gas drilling on Friday, even though the decision prolongs their uncertainty about what they can require of drillers operating within their borders. The Commonwealth Court ruled on Thursday that the state's revised gas drilling law, known as Act 13, unconstitutionally restricted municipalities' decisions about where to permit the industrial facilities used in Marcellus Shale gas extraction, like drill rigs, compressor stations and wastewater pits. Gov. Tom Corbett appealed the decision to the state Supreme Court on Friday.

Local doctor sues over Pa. chemical gag rule

WILKES-BARRE TIMES LEADER Dr. Alfonso Rodriguez says the state is preventing him from discussing fracking issues. SCRANTON – A Dallas physician has filed a federal lawsuit against several state offices, alleging a recently enacted law that limits information medical professionals can release about persons injured by chemicals used in hydraulic fracturing is impeding his ability to treat patients. Dr. Alfonso Rodriguez claims the “medical gag rule” contained in Act 13, which amended the Pennsylvania Oil and Gas Act, could prohibit him from communicating crucial information to other physicians involved in treating patients exposed to fracking chemicals. The suit, filed Friday in federal court in Scranton, names as defendants Michael Krancer, secretary of the state Department of Environmental Protection; Robert Powelson, chairman of the Public Utility Commission and Linda Kelly, state Attorney General. According to the suit:

EPA to look for lead in soil at St. Francis Kitchen site

SCRANTON TIMES-DISPATCH Federal environmental regulators plan to return to the property around St. Francis of Assisi Kitchen in Scranton this fall to assess if a century-old legacy of toxic lead processing persists in the nearby soil. The plot at Penn Avenue and Vine Street was once the home of the Euston Lead Co., a firm founded in 1914 to manufacture white lead, then a common pigment in lead paint. It is now home to a Catholic Diocese of Scranton-run facility where daily meals are provided to the homeless and working poor. During the plant's 45 years of operation and the dramatic fire that destroyed it, airborne pollution may have drifted down on the site or been carried by the wind to prope

Phila. firm fined \$200K for doctoring pollution samples

PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER A Philadelphia chemical company was fined \$200,000 Friday for altering its

polluted wastewater to fool regulators. Nupro Industries Corp. was sentenced to three years' probation, in addition to the fine, for "criminally tampering with samples of the wastewater it was discharging into Philadelphia's sewer system," U.S. Attorney Zane David Memeger and EPA Special Agent in Charge David G. McLeod Jr. announced in a news release Friday. Nupro, which produces oils and esters at its plant at Ontario and Bath Streets in Port Richmond, was charged in January and pleaded guilty in March to violating environmental laws setting monitoring standards. Specifically, Nupro was supposed to submit water samples to be tested for contaminants, but instead watered down samples between 2006 and 2007 to meet test standards.

Researchers monitor “red tides” in local waters

VIRGINIA GAZETTE GLOUCESTER -- Researchers at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science, College of William and Mary, continue to monitor the algal blooms that have been discoloring local waters during the last few weeks. These “red tides” occur in Chesapeake Bay every summer, but have appeared earlier and across a wider area than in years past, likely due to last winter’s warmth and this summer’s heat. Red tides are caused by dense blooms of tiny marine plants called algae that contain reddish pigment. Algae are normal components of all aquatic environments, but can produce what is known as a “harmful algal bloom” or “HAB” when they bloom in significant numbers and generate toxic byproducts. HABs can be harmful to both marine organisms and human health

Alcosan plan to fix overflowing sewer system focuses on 'gray' construction

PITTSBURGH POST GAZETTE The Allegheny County Sanitary Authority's proposed fix for its overflowing sewer system will be the biggest and most expensive public works construction project in the region's history, but the plan contains no "green infrastructure" that proponents say could reduce costs, create more jobs and improve community quality of life. Instead, Alcosan's \$3.6 billion draft wet weather plan, which will be officially released Tuesday to meet a federal deadline, focuses exclusively on "gray" construction -- massive underground storage tunnels, new pipes and expanded treatment facilities -- to capture and treat almost all stormwater flows.

PENNSYLVANIA

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however, may be only temporary because the governor's office announced the state has appealed to the state Supreme Court.

Pennsylvania officials to appeal ruling on shale drilling law The fight over who should control zoning rules for Marcellus Shale drilling moved to the Pennsylvania Supreme Court on Friday.

FirstEnergy forced to close Beaver County disposal site

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Low gas prices drive drillers to Ohio in search of profit After several years of non-stop drilling, too much gas and too few buyers have sent Marcellus Shale drillers from Pennsylvania to Ohio.

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Frackers follow tobacco's lead in funding research Industry trying to buy prestige of universities, while ties go unreported. Pennsylvania remains the largest state without a tax on natural gas production, thanks in part to a study released under the banner of Penn State University. The 2009 report predicted drillers would shun Pennsylvania if new taxes were imposed, and lawmakers cited it the following year when they rejected a 5 percent tax proposed by then-Gov. Ed Rendell.

Pittsburgh is making smart energy choices

Pittsburgh will replace 10 percent of its streetlights with LEDs and make other energy efficiencies.

Return of Allegheny woodrat could help to rehabilitate lost habitats across Pennsylvania As suburbia reaches farther and farther into the landscape, natural environments and habitats are changed, if not destroyed. Add pollution and deforestation, and habitats across Pennsylvania look little like they did generations ago. Such changes have greatly reduced the habitats available for the Allegheny woodrat, a threatened species the Pennsylvania Game Commission hopes can help restore those lost habitats.

State prison generates eco-friendly electricity Pa.'s corrections secretary said the renewable energy resource eliminates the need for the prison to use coal-fired boilers.

PITTSBURGH TRIBUNE-REVIEW

Sewage authority goes outside for manager

The Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority will pay an outside company at least \$1.8 million to do a job typically left to employees: managing and operating the system. At the same time, the PWSA, which has been without a full-time director for two years, will continue to pay 260 employees about \$15 million annually in salaries.

Alcosan's sewer project to cost billions The Allegheny County Sanitary Authority has installed nets at drains and

catch basins and retractable booms in rivers to prevent debris — trash, gravel, leaves, sticks — from entering the area's waterways. Completed in June, it's a relatively cheap way to help keep the area's waterways clean and free of floatables. The next step toward clean water, which Alcosan plans to announce on Tuesday, will cost billions of dollars and will take 14 years — if the work finishes on time. Preventing sanitary waste overflows into the region's rivers is complicated and certain to raise customers' water bills.

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EPA to look for lead in soil at St. Francis Kitchen site Federal environmental regulators plan to return to the property around St. Francis of Assisi Kitchen in Scranton this fall to assess if a century-old legacy of toxic lead processing persists in the nearby soil. The plot at Penn Avenue and Vine Street was once the home of the Euston Lead Co., a firm founded in 1914 to manufacture white lead, then a common pigment in lead paint. It is now home to a Catholic Diocese of Scranton-run facility where daily meals are provided to the homeless and working poor. During the plant's 45 years of operation and the dramatic fire that destroyed it, airborne pollution may have drifted down on the site or been carried by the wind to prope

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WILKES-BARRE TIMES LEADER

Local doctor sues over Pa. chemical gag rule Dr. Alfonso Rodriguez says the state is preventing him from discussing fracking issues. SCRANTON — A Dallas physician has filed a federal lawsuit against several state offices, alleging a recently enacted law that limits information medical professionals can release about persons injured by chemicals used in hydraulic fracturing is impeding his ability to treat patients. Dr. Alfonso Rodriguez claims the "medical gag rule" contained in Act 13, which amended the Pennsylvania Oil and Gas Act, could prohibit him from communicating crucial information to other physicians involved in treating patients exposed to fracking chemicals. The suit, filed Friday in federal court in Scranton, names as defendants Michael Krancer, secretary of the state Department of Environmental Protection; Robert Powelson, chairman of the Public Utility Commission and Linda Kelly, state Attorney General. According to the suit:

ALLIED NEWS

SR area drill sites bring fracking closer Shell exploring farmland; camp testing water BUTLER COUNTY — Two oil and gas well drilling sites in the Slippery Rock area have people talking about the controversial fracking process. Some are sharing their thoughts while others are hesitant to say much. "Everything's going good...I haven't heard any negatives about it," said Paul Dickey, chairman of the Slippery Rock Township board of supervisors. He was referring to a drilling site at 672 Franklin Road owned by Sylvia A. Williams, who has leased part of her 142 acres of farmland to Shell Exploration & Production Co., LP of Warrendale. Shell is still in the exploratory phase, drilling five or six test wells to see what's there, so they haven't reached the fracking stage yet, Dickey said.

NATURAL RESOURCES DEFENSE COUNCIL

EPA's water testing results in Dimock do not let the gas industry off the hook Earlier this week, EPA released the final round of results from its tests of drinking water wells in Dimock, PA - where state regulators have concluded that water supplies were contaminated with explosive levels of methane by the drilling activities of Cabot Oil and Gas. In releasing those results, EPA stated that the drinking water supplies of 61 families are safe to drink, basing that determination on the absence of significantly elevated levels of various pollutants, excluding methane. It is

critical to note that EPA was not focused on - and did not make any conclusions with respect to - whether Cabot's practices in fact contaminated the aquifer that supplies these families' wells with dangerous levels of methane. As such, the EPA findings do not exonerate Cabot, or gas drilling and fracking more broadly, of contaminating drinking water in the Dimock case or otherwise. NRDC has released the following statement in response to EPA's release: "

WILKES-BARRE CITIZENS' VOICE

Permit timeliness, guarantees at issues HARRISBURG - A month after lawmakers debated the issue without resolution, Gov. Tom Corbett has issued an executive order requiring state environmental officials to issue permits more quickly. "One of the biggest complaints I have received over and over again is the time it takes for businesses, nonprofit organizations and local governments to work through the permitting process," Corbett said. This order creates the "permit guarantee program," which requires the Department of Environmental Protection to coordinate the review of projects that need multiple permits, establish performance standards for employees doing the reviews and handle permit work online where possible.

Letter: Proposed compressor station isn't as remote as described Your July 19 article described UGI's proposed compressor station as located in a "remote area." This misrepresentation was furthered by Luzerne County Planning Director Adrian Merolli's description of its "over hill and dale" location. Merolli's bucolic language belies the fact that this station's proposed location lies dangerously close to closely inhabited communities like our own in West Wyoming. Local residents must ask why our state and local government would even consider such a hazardous installation in proximity to our communities. Residents of West Wyoming and Kingston Township should throng the jury room of the county courthouse at 7 p.m. on August 7 for the Luzerne County zoning board hearing.

Letter: Fracking reduces pollution, does not hurt drinking water A July 5 letter entitled "fracking" misses the point regarding an April op-ed written by Lou D'Amico of the Pennsylvania Independent Oil and Gas Association. The writer improperly asserts that D'Amico's remarks reflect "the attitude of the industry toward the thousands of residents of this state." But if you take a moment to actually read D'Amico's column, you'll see his comments were directed at inaccurate media coverage, and improper assertions by activists, that seek to blame everything under the sun on the development of natural gas from the Marcellus Shale, often without supporting evidence. The writer also questions the safety of hydraulic fracturing. But according to federal officials, hydraulic fracturing has never impacted water resources.

POCONO RECORD

Letter: Facts on algal bloom, acid rain

July 30, 2012 Editor, the Record: A letter writer expressed concern in the Pocono Record about excessive algae growth in Zachey's pond in East Stroudsburg. The excessive growth of algae is probably not a human-, but a weather-related and waterfowl problem. Algal blooms can be caused by several factors, but most often it is excessive phosphorus and nitrogen in the water. The source is most likely ducks and geese that eat aquatic plants and grass and then leave droppings on and near the water's edge. This problem, coupled with high temperatures and a lack of rain to dilute the nitrogen, has led to algal blooms in lakes and ponds that we usually don't see until August. The best solution is to discourage successful nesting of water fowl around bodies of water in the spring. The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission can be contacted for guidance.

ASSOCIATED PRESS (Pa.)

Zoning limits in Pa. gas drilling law struck down HARRISBURG, Pa. (AP) — A Pennsylvania appellate court panel on Thursday struck down provisions in a new law regulating the state's booming natural gas industry that opponents said would leave municipalities defenseless to protect homeowners, parks and schools from being surrounded by drilling sites or waste pits. The decision was a defeat for Gov. Tom Corbett and the natural gas industry, which had long sought the limitations, and the governor's office said an appeal to the state Supreme Court is likely.

DELAWARE

WILMINGTON NEWS JOURNAL

Water conservation urged as dry spell lingers Delaware's top environmental official urged residents Friday to conserve water to help preserve supplies in this hot, dry summer. The water situation isn't a crisis, according to Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control Secretary Collin O'Mara, but rainfall deficits are a concern.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

WASHINGTON POST

TransCanada gets final permit for southern part of Keystone XL pipeline

The Army Corps permits dealt a blow to national environmental groups striving to slow the momentum behind Keystone XL's southern leg — also known as the Gulf Coast project.

WASHINGTON TIMES

EDITORIAL: Fracking flop

EPA report undercuts hysterical claims leveled against gas production. The anti-affordable energy crowd has suffered another setback. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on Wednesday released the results of extensive testing that found nothing toxic in the water in Dimock, Pa. That's the town where the anti-drilling documentary "Gasland" filmed dramatic images of a homeowner lighting his tap water on fire. The film blamed the strange occurrence on hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, a procedure that uses a pressurized mixture to extract natural gas from shale rock formations. It argued the process had polluted the nearby ground water. Liberals were so thrilled by the hit job that they awarded it a special jury prize at the 2010 Sundance Film Festival. According to the EPA's study, drilling is the not the root of the problems in Dimock. The agency sampled the well water at 61 homes and found health concerns in only five of them. The substances found include arsenic, barium and manganese, all of which are naturally occurring.

WEST VIRGINIA

PARKERSBURG NEWS

Tuesday meeting on injection wells scheduled

MARIETTA -A public meeting to be held Tuesday in Marietta will include information about injection wells used in the fracking process and the impact they can have on the environment. The Southeast Ohio Fracking Interest Group (SEOFIG) will sponsor the forum at Marietta College's McDonough Auditorium starting at 7 p.m.

Tuesday. The purpose of the meeting is to educate and inform residents of the county who may have concerns over what types of things are being pumped into the ground, according to Cathy Schafer, of Marietta, who is a member

of SEOFIG."We have nine injection wells in Washington County with two pending in Newport Township," she said. "That is a large number for a state to have and I think it is the most in any county in Ohio." The forum will include speakers with the Center for Health, Environment and Justice, Meigs Citizens Action Now and a retiree of the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection.

Derecho's messy impact still being felt PARKERSBURG - A month after the June 29 derecho that swept through the Mid-Ohio Valley, local agencies and power companies are still assessing the damage and learning how they can better prepare for the next big storm. Life has returned to normal for most residents, even those who were the last to get electricity restored. "

MARYLAND

BALTIMORE SUN

O'Malley: Farmers are strong partners in cleaning the Chesapeake Bay In their June 18 op-ed "No more half-measures for the bay," Parris N. Glendening, Bernie Fowler, Tom Horton, Gerald W. Winegrad, Walter Boynton and Thomas R. Fisher, great friends of the environment, acknowledge Maryland's efforts to curb "bay-choking nutrient pollutants" but blame Maryland farmers and population growth for the lack of progress in restoring the health of the Chesapeake Bay. I disagree. Over the last several years, Maryland's farmers have been some of the strongest partners in our efforts. Last fall, Maryland farmers planted a record 429,818 acres of cover crops, preventing an estimated 2.58 million pounds of nitrogen from entering the bay. Cover crops are widely considered to be one of the most cost-effective and environmentally sustainable ways to control soil erosion and reduce nutrient runoff in the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries during the winter. Additionally, the op-ed largely focused on the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA)'s proposed nutrient management regulations. The development of these proposed regulations has been a two-year collaborative process involving the BayStat Science Panel, as well as environmental, agricultural and municipal stakeholders. When taken as a whole, these regulations will significantly advance agricultural water quality management and Chesapeake Bay restoration. ... -- Martin O'Malley, Annapolis, The writer, a Democrat, is Maryland's governor.

Scout works to deter spread of invasive freshwater algae

SALISBURY DAILY TIMES

Army Corps remains in Rehoboth REHOBOTH BEACH -- Months after what was supposed to be the completion of the Rehoboth Beach replenishment project, the United States Army Corps of Engineers has continued to make regular appearances along the shore. The Corps will remain in Rehoboth until mid-September to ensure that the outfall pipes remain unclogged. And because of the lack of storms in the area this season, the engineers are playing the role of Mother Nature. "We're making sure the outfall pipes are clear," Corps spokesman Steve Rochette said. "When we did the renourishment project, some of the sand covered the pipes and it hasn't eroded as we had expected.

MCCLATCHY NEWSPAPERS

Building a better island in *bay* POPLAR ISLAND, Md. - Eighteen years ago, Justin Callahan took a small boat into the Chesapeake Bay to study the last remaining bits of what had been a wildlife paradise. Bobbing above what once was a miles-long island that had eroded to a couple of tiny pieces of dirt, he had no way of knowing the scale of the plan that the Army Corps of Engineers was hatching. It was some plan, inviting comparisons to the Titanic in terms of engineering hubris and to Jurassic Park in terms of one-upping the natural world.

MARYLAND GAZETTE

Farmers say state is piling on with new manure regulations Say too much of the cleanup burden is falling on them —Farmers, wastewater managers and environmentalists have found common ground — they share anger about proposed state manure and fertilizer management regulations that could be approved as early as next month. The regulations were designed “to achieve consistency in the way all nutrients are managed and help Maryland meet nitrogen and phosphorus reduction goals” for cleaning up the Chesapeake Bay, according to the Maryland Department of Agriculture, which drafted the legislation. The goals are part of a Watershed Improvement Plan required of states in the Bay’s watershed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to make more progress in a three-decades-old effort to reduce Bay pollution. But the farmers say too much of the cleanup burden is falling on them — and at a huge financial cost.

HUFFINGTON POST

Blog: Got Shale? What Marylanders Should Expect Without a Permanent Ban on Shale Gas

Drilling and fracking for shale gas continues to expand across the East Coast despite consumer outcry over the environmental and health risks associated with this dangerous form of fossil fuel extraction. Now, the United States Geological Survey (USGS) has identified new potential targets in central and southern Maryland, as well as the Eastern Shore, in addition to the Marcellus Shale in Western Maryland. The oil and gas industry and their advocates can be expected to treat Maryland like a sacrifice zone in order to extract as much gas as possible unless we implement a permanent ban on fracking for oil and gas in the state.

ASSOCIATED PRESS (Md.)

WORCESTER: EPA awards \$173,000 to Md. Coastal Bays program OCEAN CITY — The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency says it is giving \$173,400 to the Maryland Coastal Bays Program for students on the Eastern Shore to pursue environmental careers. The funds are for educational, research, and career-related activities focusing on green infrastructure. That includes marine and science programs, internships and environmental stewardship programs. The EPA says the award increases EPA funding for the initiative to more than \$600,000.

VIRGINIA

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Researchers monitor “red tides” in local waters GLOUCESTER -- Researchers at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science, College of William and Mary, continue to monitor the algal blooms that have been discoloring local waters during the last few weeks. These “red tides” occur in Chesapeake Bay every summer, but have appeared earlier and across a wider area than in years past, likely due to last winter’s warmth and this summer’s heat. Red tides are caused by dense blooms of tiny marine plants called algae that contain reddish pigment. Algae are normal components of all aquatic environments, but can produce what is known as a “harmful algal bloom” or “HAB” when they bloom in significant numbers and generate toxic byproducts. HABs can be harmful to both marine organisms and human health

ASSOCIATED PRESS (Va.)

Uranium mining focus of August meetings in Va. RICHMOND, Va. (AP) -- The contentious subject of uranium mining is the focus of a raft of meetings in Virginia in August. The state Department of Health has scheduled hearings in three locations, starting Aug. 7 in Chatham. Others are planned in Warrenton and Virginia Beach. They

are intended to gauge the public's concerns about uranium mining's impact on streams and wells. Some of those meetings will run all day. Environmental groups have complained officials gave little notice of the meetings.

DEQ Issues Drought Watch for South-Central Va. RICHMOND, Va. (AP) -- The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality has issued a drought watch for the Appomattox River basin in the south-central area of the state. The watch issued Thursday is intended to increase public awareness of the potential for a significant drought. The advisory covers the counties of Amelia, Appomattox, Buckingham, Chesterfield, Cumberland, Dinwiddie, Nottoway, Powhatan, Prince Edward and Prince George. The cities of Colonial Heights, Petersburg and Hopewell are included, as are the towns Appomattox, Blackstone, Burkeville, Crewe and Farmville.

Sustainable development report gauges progress across Va

An analysis of non-tidal Virginia areas that are part of the Chesapeake Bay watershed found wide variations in the adoption of development codes intended to keep sediment and runoff from entering rivers and streams. The analysis was part of a report by conservation groups concerned with the well-being of three Virginia rivers: the James, the Potomac and the Rappahannock. The groups examined local development codes and ordinances of 41 cities, towns and counties to assess how well they're embracing "low-impact development" practices. These are rules designed to filter and store rainfall runoff, for example, instead of letting them flow freely into rivers and streams. One approach involves creating more green spaces. Each locality was rated on 76 low-impact principles grouped into categories. They include minimized land disturbances, vegetation preservation, and reduction of impervious surfaces, such as narrower streets. The scores ranged from 3 percent to 72 percent, with the average locality scoring 27 percent. Each locality scored well in at least one category. Bill Street, executive director of the James River Association, said the study "shows that there's a lot of opportunities" to improve on those practices. "It's important for folks to realize that the land that affects the Chesapeake Bay is not just those counties that touch it," Street said in an interview Tuesday. "It's the land all the way upstream along the James River and the Rappahannock and the Shenandoah Valley that drain into those rivers."

ASSOCIATED PRESS (Va.)

Kaine, Allen appear separately before Farm Bureau meeting in Lynchburg LYNCHBURG, Va. — Democrat Tim Kaine knows his Senate bid has a tough row to hoe winning over farmers and agribusiness in rural Virginia where Democratic policies on tobacco, environmental regulation and coal aren't popular. His Republican foe, former Sen. George Allen, won a standing ovation that Kaine didn't get when he advocated the permanent repeal of the federal estate tax to a statewide forum of the Virginia Farm Bureau in Lynchburg on Friday.... Rural Virginia is always a tough sell for Democrats. Farm families chafe at Democrats' support nationally for gun control, environmental regulations and anti-smoking policies that have eaten deeply into the region's tobacco farming. Friday presented no surprises. Kaine and Allen outlined the deep differences on major issues in the campaign.

MISCELLANEOUS

NEW YORK TIMES

Editorial: Canada's Oil, the World's Carbon

Last month, the State Department formally invited public comment on the issues it should consider in a new environmental assessment of the Keystone XL, a 1,200-mile pipeline that would connect the Alberta oil sands to an existing pipeline in Nebraska. The review process was triggered when TransCanada filed a new pipeline application after its first proposal was rejected by President Obama in January. The department's first environmental assessment was grossly inadequate, one of the main reasons President Obama rejected the proposal.

Strong Storms Threaten Ozone Layer Over U.S., Study Says

Strong summer thunderstorms that pump water high into the upper atmosphere pose a threat to the protective ozone layer over the United States, researchers said on Thursday, drawing one of the first links between climate change and ozone loss over populated areas. In a study published online by the journal Science, Harvard University scientists reported that some storms send water vapor miles into the stratosphere -- which is normally drier than a desert -- and showed how such events could rapidly set off ozone-destroying reactions with chemicals that remain in the atmosphere from CFCs, refrigerant gases that are now banned.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

The grass is always greener ... if paintedWhen this summer's drought turned her prized lawn brown, Terri LoPrimo fought back, but not with sprinklers: She had it painted green, making her suddenly lush-appearing yard the envy of her neighborhood. The Staten Island, N.Y., resident and her husband, Ronnie, hired a local entrepreneur to spruce up their yard by spraying it with a deep-green organic dye. By Monday, the couple's property was aglow with newly green blades of grass and no watering needed to sustain it. "It looks just like a spring lawn, the way it looks after a rain. It's really gorgeous," said Ms. LoPrimo, a 62-year-old retiree.

Chinese city kills project after pollution protest

QIDONG, China -- Authorities in eastern China dropped plans for a waste water discharge project Saturday after thousands of protesters angry about pollution took to the streets. It was the latest of many such confrontations in a country where three decades of rapid economic expansion have come at an environmental price.